

Camp at Willets Neck on the East River  
Nov<sup>r</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> 1776

My Dearest Friend

Though it is but a few days  
since I wrote last, I know you would not forgive  
me if I omitted giving you a few lines to  
acquaint you that we have at last taken  
this famous Fort Washington, the pride and  
Bulwark of the Americans & which they thought  
impregnable and indeed I believe it would have  
been so if they had dared to have defended to  
the last, but such cowardly scoundrels who  
could give up such a place as this was, I am  
fully persuaded will never stand us any where  
again. you have I am sure maps of the country  
therefore I will describe the place to you as well  
as I can. Fort Washington is situated upon



the New York Island about a mile from Kingsbridge  
between the North River and Harlem Creek  
upon a high hill that commands everything, &  
their lines ran out toward Kingsbridge  
about half a mile the strongest ground by nature  
I ever saw, in the most advanced part of them upon  
a steep rocky hill which the British who  
attached on that side were obliged to march up  
they had a redoubt with two pieces of heavy cannon  
and an embrasure for a third, towards New York  
these lines extended about a mile and half  
and quite across the Land from Harlem Creek  
to the North River, with several redoubts  
and other strong works all the way back to the  
Fort: on the 16<sup>th</sup> of this Month the attack  
was made at 3 places, Lord Percy attacked  
their lines from New York; Colonel Raal



with 3 Brigades of Hessians under the command  
of General Kniphausen attacked their lines from  
the Kingsbridge side, the Light Infantry, Grenadier  
Guards, and Royal Highlanders attacked them in  
the center by crossing over Harlem Creek.

These attacks were made at the same moment.  
The Highlanders as suffered a good deal in  
their boats, but notwithstanding a very heavy  
fire of grape shot & musketry made good their  
Landing, & pushed on to cut them off from the  
fort, the Rebels who were at this time engaged  
with Lord Percy ran away as fast as they could  
but were cut off by Colonel Sterling who  
obliged two hundred of them to lay down their  
arms. all parties then pushed on for the  
fort. the Hessians on their side notwithstanding  
the difficulty they met with, never made a



halt till they got up to the ditch of the  
fort. when we surrounded it and were just  
going to storm it, they sent out a flag of truce  
to Lord Percy desiring to march out with the  
honours of war, which General Howe refused  
and summoned them to surrender giving them half  
an hour to consider of it. they took his advice  
and surrendered prisoners of war to the number  
of 2600 we took 29 pieces of cannon  
a vast quantity of stores of all sorts, and  
of north Provision. We lost in the attack  
200 Hessians killed and 140 wounded, 25  
British killed and 90 wounded. We have  
a detachment gone over into the Jersey system  
= day under Lord Cornwallis, about six thousand



then to attack Fort Lee and Fort Constitution  
= from two Rebel Forts on the North River,  
I suppose this will be pretty near the last thing  
this year. where we are to winter I don't know.

My Love to Linton and to any body you  
think deserving of it. & believe me my Dear

Unalterably yours

J. Hanley.

Nov 23.

We have just received the pleasing  
news that Lord Cornwallis's lost taken the  
two forts, thirty five pieces of Cannon  
2 Brass Mortars and a large Iron one  
that we left at Boston, a vast quantity  
of stores of all sorts and seventy prisoners  
with no loss on our side. all are adieu



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